

Message Text

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14-11

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 SAJ-01 SCCT-01 /070 W

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P R 240930Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1946

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3573

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR SP

SUBJ: UNREST IN BASQUE PROVINCES: FURTHER GOVERNMENT
AND RIGHTIST REACTION

REF: MADRID 3356

1. SUMMARY: GOS HAS TAKEN NEW STEPS, INCLUDING NEWS
BLACKOUT, TO ENFORCE ORDER IN BASQUE PROVINCES AND PREVENT
FURTHER POLITICIZING OF BASQUE ISSUE ELSEWHERE. CHURCH
BISHOPS HAVE URGED BOTH BASQUES AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHOR-
ITIES TO DESIST FROM VIOLENCE OF ALL TYPES. RIGHT-WING FORCES
CONTINUE HARASSMENT OF ETA SUPPORTERS, AND IN MADRID,
RIGHTIST ALLIES OF POLICE DEMONSTRATED FOR STRONGER
MEASURES, CALLING FOR OUSTER OF ARIAS GOVERNMENT.

2. RIGHT-WING VIGILANTE GROUPS CONTINUE TO HARASS ETA SUPP-
ORTERS OR KNOWN SEPARATISTS IN BASQUE PROVINCES WITH
SPORADIC PERSONAL ATTACKS ON PERSONS AND PROPERTY, REPORTEDLY
IN SOME CASES WITH POLICE ACQUIESCENCE OR EVEN ACTIVE
COLLABORATION OF POLICE IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES. OVER 1,000
RIGHTIST PARTICIPANTS IN MEMORIAL MASS MAY 22 FOR VICTIMS
OF "SEPARATISM" IN MDARID CHURCH DEMONSTRATED AT DIRECTORATE
GENERAL OF SECURITY IN PUERTA DEL SOL. AS CROWD SANG
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FALANGIST HYMN AND HELD RAISED FISTS, POLICE BYSTANDERS,

WHO MADE NO EFFORT TO INTERFERE, SALUTED. LEAFLETS URGING THAT ARIAS STEP DOWN WERE CIRCULATED AMONG CROWD; LEAFLET ALSO ALLUDED TO FORTHCOMING PRESIDENTIAL VISIT SAYING THAT SPAIN SHOULD HAVE LEADER REPRESENTATIVE OF PEOPLE WHO WOULD "DEFEND BASES". ARIAS DEPICTED AS "SECRET ENEMY WITHIN" WHO MUST BE REMOVED IN EFFORT TO "SAVE THE FATHERLAND". WHILE DEMONSTRATION WAS ANOTHER INDICATION GOVERNMENT TOLERANCE OF RIGHT, IT WAS NON-VIOLENT AND NOT LARGE IN TURNOUT.

3. GOS MINISTER OF INTERIOR ISSUED ORDER MAY 21 IMPOSING BLACKOUT ON NEWS AND COMMENTARY ABOUT DISTURBANCES IN TWO BASQUE PROVINCES AFFECTED BY STATE OF EXCEPTION ORDER OF APRIO 25 (REFTEL). ORDER STATES THAT FALSE REPORTS AND RUMORS CIRCULATED IN MEDIA HAD HANDICAPPED INVESTIGATIONS AND MAINTENANCE OF ORDER.

4. ON MAY 22 CAPTAIN GENERAL OF SIXTH MILITARY REGION, LT. GEN. PRADA CANILLAS, VISITED GUARD AND ARMED POLICE BASES IN ONE OF TWO AFFECTED PROVINCES AND STATED: "REST ASSURED THAT EVEN IF ARMY'S MISSION IS NOT TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC ORDER I WANT YOU (POLICE) TO KNOW THAT WE ARE BEHIND YOU."

5. SPANISH CATHOLIC BISHOP'S CONFERENCE ISSUED STATEMENT MAY 22 REPUDIATING VIOLENCE AS LEGITIMATE CHRISTIAN MEANS FOR DEFENSE OF IDEALS AND CONDEMNING "ASSASSINATIONS AND ATTACKS AGAINST THE INTEGRITY OF PERSONS AND THEIR POSSESSIONS AND ALL UNJUST REACTION OR REPRESSION AGAINST SUCH ACTS." STATEMENT ADDED THAT "NEITHER DEFENSE OF MOST NOBLE IDEALS OR EVEN OF PUBLIC ORDER CAN JUSTIFY ACTS OF VIOLENCE THAT INFRINGE HUMAN RIGHTS."

6. COMMENT: AS PAST EXPERIENCES HAVE SHOWN, FEW ISSUES CAPABLE OF MOBILIZING ULTRA-RIGHT AS MUCH AS KILLING OF POLICE. FAR RIGHT NOW IN POSITION TO USE TWIN ANATHEMAS OF SACRIFICE OF POLICEMEN AND ALLEGED TOLERANCE OF SEPARATISM AS GROUNDS FOR DEMANDING REMOVAL OF ARIAS--SOMETHING FAR RIGHT HAS SOUGHT IN ANY EVENT BECAUSE OF ARIAS GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO LIBERALIZE. SYMPATHY WITH THIS LINE AMONG PUBLIC ORDER FORCES SUGGESTED BY FACT THAT POLICE BYSTANDERS MADE NO ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE WITH DEMONSTRATION--EVEN SALUTING

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DURING FALANGIST HYMN--OR TO PREVENT DISTRIBUTION OF LEAFLETS WHICH WOULD NORMALLY BE CONSIDERED SUBVERSIVE UNDER CURRENT PUBLIC ORDER LEGISLATION.

7. WHILE PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF GENERAL PRADA CANILLAS HAVE USUALLY HAD RIGHTIST FLAVOR, HIS EXPRESSION OF MILITARY SUPPORT FOR POLICE REFLECT GROWING CONCERN AND ATTENTION AMONG PROFESSIONAL MILITARY TOWARD PUBLIC ORDER PROBLEMS

IN NORTH. CHURCH STATEMENT ON THE OTHER HAND, WHILE VAGUE
AND LOFTY, DOES MAKE POINT CLEARLY THAT COUNTER-TERRORISM,
EVEN IN NAME OF PUBLIC ORDER, IS UNACCEPTABLE. AMONG
INCIDENTS THAT MAY HAVE LED GOVERNMENT TO IMPOSE NEWS
BALCKOUT WAS WIDELY CIRCULATED EMBARRASSING REPORT THAT
BALBOA BULL RING HAD BECOME TEMPORARY DETENTION CENTER
FOR ARRESTED BASQUE DISSIDENTS. WHILE PROVINCIAL CIVIL
GOVERNOR HAS ISSUED VEHEMENT DENIAL OF SUCH REPORTS, AMCONSUL
BILBAO STATES REPORTS FROM EXCELLENT SOURCES PERSIST THAT
BULL RING IS BEING USED BY POLICE FOR AT LEAST TEMPORARY
DETENTIONS OR PROCESSING OF SUSPECTS.
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